A

SERMON

Preach'd at

MAGHERALIN,

ON THE

OCCASION

OF THE

DEATH

OF

Sir *John Rawdon*, Bar^t.

LATE

Of *Moyrah*, in the County of *Down*, who died, *Feb.* 1. 1723.

By *GEORGE WILKINS*, A. M. Rector of *Blaris*, in the Diocefs of *Down* and *Connor*.

DUBLIN:

Printed by J. HYDE and E. DOBSON, for R. GUNNE, in *Capel-Street*, 1725.

BRITISH MUSEUM

TO THE

Lady *RAWDON*,

Widow and Relict

OF

Sir *John Rawdon*, Bar^t.

MADAM,

THE Relation you bear to that Gentleman, whoſe Character and Virtues are hereafter attempted, the ſpecial Authority and Guardianſhip you have over a young Gentleman, the Repreſentative of an Honourable and Antient Family, and Heir to an ample Fortune, the general good Eſteem in which the World is ſo Juſt as to hold you, together with the particular Obligations, which I my ſelf lie under on the account of the many repeated Favours I have from Time to Time had the Honour to receive, both from the beſt of Friends, Sir JOHN RAWDON *himſelf in his Life-time, your Ladyſhip ſince his Death, and indeed from his and your whole Family, give your Ladyſhip a full Title to the following Diſcourſe.*

DEDICATION.

Already, the future Happineſs of young Sir JOHN RAWDON, *and the Figure he is to make in Life is very juſtly calculated, as well from your Ladyſhip's excellent Conduct towards him, as from the Pregnancy of his Parts and Underſtanding, and that Manly Boldneſs, accompanied with Innocence, which are the early Ornaments of his Childhood; already we behold him out-ſtripping his Years, and laying the Foundation of true Greatneſs and Worth.*

That your Ladyſhip may live long, with maternal Pleaſure, to ſhew him the way to Virtue and Prudence, that he may proceed from Beauty to ſtrength, and grow in Wiſdom and Years, and Favour with GOD *and* MAN, *are the Prayers of,*

Madam,

Your LADYSHIP's

moſt obedient

humble Servant,

Geo. Wilkins.

ACTS viii. 2.

And devout Men carried Stephen *to his Burial, and made great Lamentation over him.*

THE great Deſign of the Son of GOD's Coming into the World was to make a full, perfect, and ſufficient Oblation, Satisfaction and Attonement for the Sins of Mankind, and to that End to ſuffer himſelf in the way of his Father's moſt Divine Decree, to fall a Sacrifice to the Rage of his cruel Enemies, who, through their wilful Ignorance, had ſtrangely miſtaken him for an Impoſtor, and nailed him to a Croſs, a Death appointed for the moſt profligate Criminals; though at the ſame time that they were imbruing their hands in the Blood of that innocent Perſon, they were accompliſhing the greateſt and moſt providential Good, which the Wiſdom of GOD had contrived for the ſatisfying his own Juſtice and Holineſs in the Pardon of Sin, to raiſe fallen Man to a State of Recovery, that by Repentance and Faith in a crucified Saviour he might be qualified for the Divine Favour, and be made Partaker of Grace here, and endleſs Joys and Happineſs hereafter in the Kingdom of Heaven.

And as Chriſt himſelf thus underwent a moſt ſhameful and ignominious Death for our Salvation, ſo he has made it a part of his Religion and our Duty to him, to follow him in Sufferings, and to be made Perfect, by openly confeſſing our Faith and Dependance on him at the Expence of our Lives, whenever it ſhall be the good Pleaſure of GOD to exerciſe us with ſuch Tryals of our Faith, and to call us to ſuch an honourable, ſuch an advantagious Profeſſion.

It has been the diſtinguiſhing Glory of St. *Stephen*, whoſe Burial is here mentioned in the Text, to be the Firſt in the Noble Army of Martyrs that have ſince followed their great Maſter in his Triumphant Way, and vanquiſhed Death by bravely confeſſing him to be the Son of GOD, and publickly owning him for the common Saviour of the World, and avowing their

ſure

ſure hope of Eternal Life by the Power of his Death and Reſurrection.

My chief Aim in diſcourſing to you upon this Place of Scripture at this time is, to revive in your Memories, and propoſe to your Imitation the Character and Virtue of a Gentleman, whom you All knew, and therefore loved and eſteemed, I mean Sir *John Rawdon*, whom we have lately had the melancholy Occaſion, as the devout Men did St. *Stephen*, to carry to his Burial, and make great Lamentation over him.

But before I do this, I muſt deſire your Attention, whilſt I give you ſome Inſtruction in a Point of Religious Knowledge, which my Text calls upon me to acquaint you withal; and that is the Nature of Funeral Rites.

And in ſpeaking to this Subject, I ſhall,

Firſt, Give ſome account of Rites of Burial, and eſpecially of thoſe we call Chriſtian Burial. And then,

Secondly, I ſhall take notice of the Reaſons upon which thoſe Rites are grounded.

And, Firſt, To give ſome account of Funeral Rites, or Rites of Burial, and eſpecially of thoſe we call Chriſtian Burial. By Funeral Rites then I underſtand ſuch an Order of decent Actions and Performances, with regard to the Bodies of deceaſed Men, as may ſhew the Value we have for one another, and properly diſtinguiſh our Remains from thoſe of the Beaſts that periſh, by laying them down in their Graves with marks of Love and Reſpect, and performing to them ſuch laſt Offices as may ſpeak the Honour we had for them when Living.

This Conduct I take to ariſe from a kind of Natural Principle in us, which ſeems very deeply rooted in the Minds and Affections of Men; To ſhew a kind Regard to the Bodies of our Fellow-Creatures, has ſomething very Venerable in it, that we ſet a juſt Eſteem upon our own Human Nature, and hold it a part of our Duty, as we are ſociable Creatures, to ſend our Companions, in Life, out of this World, with peculiar Marks and Badges of Diſtinction.

Accordingly,

Accordingly, all civilized Nations have inſtituted ſolemn Actions which expreſs the Regard of the Living to the Dead, and form the Pomp of Funerals. The *Egyptians*, *Greeks*, *Romans*, and indeed all the *Eaſtern* Nations, as well as the *Jews*, have appointed Ceremonies, both ſtately and expenſive, fitted to that awful Occaſion. Such were the Anointings, Embalmings, Perfumings of the Antients; their Arraying their Dead in rich and ſumptuous Robes; Exhibiting publick Shews; Carrying the Arms and Enſigns of the Deceaſed in open Proceſſion; their *Threnodiæ*, *Dirges*, Songs in praiſe of the Dead; their Funeral Orations, opening out their great and good Actions, and ſetting them forth as Patterns of Glory and Imitation. Such were their Mournings, Tombs, Monuments, Preſcriptions, Banners, Garlands, and many other Particulars of this kind, too many here to be related.

Theſe, and ſuch as theſe, have, through the different Ages of the World, been the common Decencies of Men to the Bodies of their departed Friends; and Chriſtians have not only retained moſt of them, but have likewiſe added other Ceremonies, ſuch as grew out of their Religion, and by which the Obſequies of departed Chriſtians may be diſtinguiſhed from thoſe of other Men, as the other Rites and Ceremonis were intended to diſtinguiſh Men from all other Creatures. The Celebrating theſe is what we commonly call Chriſtian Burial. And they conſiſt chiefly in Offering up Prayers to GOD at the Funeral of the Diſciples and Followers of the Son of GOD: And when we ſee ſuch carried to their Graves, and a Form of Worſhip celebrated ſuitable to the Occaſion, we may conclude, that they dy'd in the Communion and Charity of the Church, becauſe we hear the Aſſembly of thoſe, who attend them to their Funerals, taking that opportunity of lifting up their Hearts and Voices to GOD, and praying to him for a ſpeedy and joyful Redemption out of the Miſeries of this ſinful World, and thanking him for having delivered their Brother from all the Cares and Toils of this Life.

This

This is not only an innocent but a useful Employment, as it impresseth a lively sense of our own Mortality, and gives us a View of the Shortness and Uncertainty of our Lives, and puts us in mind of our Death, and that Preparation which is necessary to fit us for the Judgment of GOD, and the sure Consequences thereof. To take all proper Opportunities of serving GOD is surely the Business of every honest and faithful Worshipper of him, and to neglect such an awful, such a solemn Occasion as this, is such an Omission of a known Duty, as must be a Shame and Reproach to those who shall be guilty of it.

What! shall they, who believe and expect a future State of Happiness and Glory, meet together and accompany their departed Brother's Relicks to the Grave, and shall they there appear Dumb and without a Voice? Shall they then be silent, and only with sorrowful Countenances and mournful Tears look upon one another, and bewail his Loss, and their own helpless Condition, and stupidly gaze upon each other, as if they had left him there for Ever, and had no hopes of ever seeing him again, no Expectation of a blessed Resurrection, and the Glories of a future State, as if he had dy'd like the Beasts that perish, had no Inheritance in Hereafter, no Portion but the Grave, Worms, Rottenness and Destruction? No. To acknowledge our own Mortality, to pray to GOD to strengthen our Frailty, to enable us to bear the Fatigues of Life, to comfort us in all the Evils with which we are encompassed, to confess our Hopes of a better Life, to animate one another with the Joys that are before us, and to confirm our selves in the Faith of our holy Profession, has something truly Brave and Noble in it, and highly becoming the Expectation of a Christian, and is of singular Use and Benefit to us.

And yet notwithstanding this, there are not wanting those, who arraign this Practice as Popish and Idolatrous, and slanderously say of us, That whilst we are engaged in this Service, we are then praying for

the Dead, and ſtick not to affirm, That all ſuch Worſhip and Service is vain and ſuperſtitious; and more eſpecially, That the Liturgy which the Wiſdom of our Church hath given us for that Occaſion is a manifeſt Proof it.

To this opprobrious Objection then I deſire leave to anſwer, That we have no ſuch View or Intention in that antient and commendable Service; That we are fully inſtructed in the Nature of the Worſhip we are then paying Almighty GOD, and that we are clearly taught, and throughly convinced that this Life is the only Scene of Action, the one ſingle Opportunity we can have to fit and prepare our ſelves for approaching Futurity; That on the other hand, the Grave is a Place of Darkneſs, Silence and Inactivity, where we are to lie buried, claſped in the Arms of Death, void of all Powers, till we are awakened and ſtirred by the Trumpet of GOD to the general Reſurrection; That we are not able to alter our Condition, but that in whatſoever State we go out of this Life, that muſt be our Lot for Ever; and, That therefore no Prayers or Interceſſion of ours can in any wiſe affect the Dead, or have the leaſt influence upon them, becauſe as the Tree falleth, ſo it muſt lie. *Now is the Day of our Salvation, and the Night cometh, when no Man can work.* So that to charge us with that vain empty Practice of praying for the Dead, in the general Notion of it, is the falſeſt Accuſation imaginable, and nothing but the groſſeſt Ignorance of our Principles, or the moſt obdurate Purpoſe to blacken us can lay any thing to our charge in this Point.

As to the particular Order for the Burial of the Dead, contained in our Service-Book, it conſiſting chiefly of Portions of Scripture, it is not eaſy to imagine how any thing can be objected againſt it. Yet ſo it is, the Adverſaries thereof have preſumed to fix ſome Cenſure upon it; and there are two Expreſſions againſt which they have more eſpecially thought fit to level their Artillery.

The first is this, *For as much as it hath pleased Almighty* GOD *to take unto himself the Soul of our dear Brother here departed.* In which words, they say, we affirm, that every Person, over whose Relicks we pronounce them, must certainly be saved; whereas, as they are the Expression in a common Office, many of those, at whose Interment we deliver them, have not probably died in a State of Salvation, as having been very wicked Persons, and of whose Repentance we have not any the least Assurance.

In answer to which, we desire such Objectors to remember, That that Expression is not an Invention of the Compilers of the Liturgy, but a Scripture-Phrase, and is to be found, *Eccles.* xii. 7. where it is said, *Then shall Dust return to the Earth as it was, and the Spirit shall return to* GOD *who gave it.* So that when they accuse us of any Error or Absurdity contained in that Expression, they do not arraign us who use it, but the Oracles of God, and charge the Scriptures as delivering something dissonant from Truth, and thereby dishonour God, the Author of them.

The Church, by using that Expression in the Office of Burial, understands no more by it, but only this, That the Souls of all Men, after their departure from the Body, are in a more particular manner in the hands and at the disposal of Almighty God, who reserveth them for Happiness or Misery in their State of Separation unto the Judgment of the great Day: And this is not only the Notion and Faith of the Church, but it is the genuine Sense of the Place, and what the wise *Solomon* himself means by it. When then we repeat those words, *For as much as it hath pleased Almighty* GOD *to take to himself the Soul of our dear Brother here deceased*, we do no more than express our sense of the State of departed Spirits, and publish our Faith in God, that when we go hence, we do not flit into open Air, and wander in the loose Regions of expanded space, but that we are preserved by his immediate Providence in a way of Order agreeable to his Divine Wisdom and Care over us. And

this

this is an Article of Religion, adapted to the Occaſion, and properly ſuited to the then ſerious Meditation of our Hearts.

The other Expreſſion from which the Adverſaries of this Service would endeavour to raiſe an Objection is this, *That when we ſhall depart this Life, we may Reſt in him, as our Hope is this our Brother doth.* This Expreſſion they tell us likewiſe is too wide and comprehenſive, as it takes in the *Whole* of them at whoſe Funerals they are repeated. That there are many whoſe notorious ſcandalous Lives leave us no room to hope that they Reſt in the Lord; and that therefore theſe words, as they are applied to ſuch, are in the Mouths of thoſe who offer them to GOD in the way of Prayer, no leſs than a direct Falſhood, and ſomething which our own Conſciences tell us is not true, and that therefore this Expreſſion ſhould be razed out of that Office, or at leaſt left to the diſcretion of the Miniſter, to uſe or not to uſe, as the Circumſtances of the Deceaſed require.

To this we ſay, That theſe words are barely an Expreſſion of Charity; and by ſaying, *As our Hope is*, we form no peremptory Judgment of the deceaſed Perſon, only we let the World know, we owned him for our Chriſtian-Brother, and that he died in the Communion of the Church, and that we do not take upon us to exclude him the Number of the Faithful; and that at his Death, for any thing that is abſolutely certain to the contrary, however wickedly he might have lived, he may ſtill have repented, and that GOD may be gracious unto him, and through his infinite Mercy, which is not only over his own Works, but alſo over the worſt of ours, our Sins, he may be prevailed upon to pardon all his Offences, and admit him to the Joys of Heaven.

But ſuppoſing ſtill, ſome were otherwiſe perſuaded concerning the State of the Deceaſed, and that they were almoſt convinced that he lived and died in his Sins, yet nevertheleſs I do not ſee but we may be juſtified in the common uſe of that Phraſe, becauſe eve-

ry Perſon preſent may not be of the ſame Mind, one may have a better Opinion and another a worſe, and it would be hard that they who retain a kind ſenſe of him ſhould be debarred hearing their favourable Account publickly remembred and taken notice of in that laſt ſolemn Office; and it is much better that they who judge hardly concerning their Brother ſhould be offended by the uſe of that gentle Phraſe, than they who judge favourably by the omiſſion of it.

We ſay further in this Caſe, That this Expreſſion is not only acceptable to the Friends of the Deceaſed, but that it is matter of ſolid Comfort to all who expect a joyful Reſurrection, and to expreſs our Hope of thoſe who are gone before us, will help to animate and ſtir up our own earneſt Deſires after Eternal Life, and arm us with Courage to bear the Afflictions and Temptations of this, and furniſh us with Strength to perſevere in good Works, and keep us direct in the Road that leads to Eternal Life.

As to the leaving this Expreſſion open to the diſcretion of the Miniſter, this would be attended with ſuch a Train of ill Conſequences as would neceſſarily breed Factions and Diſſentions between the Miniſter and his People, and lay a Foundation of perpetual Feuds and Animoſities among them; for ſuppoſe the Miniſter ſhould at any time judge it proper to omit this Expreſſion of Hope concerning our Brother, the Friends and Relations would immediately be inflamed againſt the Miniſter, as doing Injury to the Fame and Reputation of the Dead, and ſtaining his Memory; and they would exclaim, that he had placed a Blot upon his Neighbour's Name, and this would whet their Spirits, and ſower them againſt him, whereby his Office and Miniſtry would be deſpiſed and made of no Uſe or Effect among them.

Moreover we are to remember, That the Clergy are Men of like Paſſions and Infirmities with other Men, and Humour and Reſentment may ſometimes prevail upon them to omit this Phraſe on purpoſe to

provoke

provoke the Wrath of others, and do Indignities to their Families, and fix a Blemish upon their Name. And for my own part, I freely confess I do not care how little is left to the discretion of the Minister in the Publick Worship of God. The Service of the Church should bear an equal Regard unto all Men, and shew no Respect of Persons whatsoever. Besides, the Congregation is much safer in a known settled Form of Words than they can be in any Man's discretion, and the less we are subject to the private management even of the wisest Man alive, the surer we are in what we have to do, can be the ablest Judge of it, and more compleat Masters both of our outward and inward Actions, and go on with more readiness and certainty in it; the less dependent we are upon any Man, the freer we are, especially in the Publick Worship of God, where every thing ought to be known, plain and certain, and be laid open before us, and in our view, that so we may make it our own, as well by understanding it, as by the constant use of it.

I proceed now in the second Place to illustrate the Reasons upon which these Rites I have now been speaking of are founded, and they are these following.

The Excellence and Perfection of our own Human Bodies.

Their Part and Share in the Exercise of all our Virtues.

They are those Parts of us upon which the Seals of the Covenant of Grace are immediately performed.

Our Bodies are the Temples of the Holy Ghost.

Our blessed Saviour, the Son of God, was pleased to take upon him our Human Nature, and consequently that Part of us which is the Object of our Senses, our Body.

Lastly, our Human Bodies will be raised again at the general Resurrection, be united to the Souls that before informed them, and bear a Part in that future Eternal State which is provided for us in the World to come.

But

But I do but just mention these, because Time will not allow me to make a particular Enlargement upon them, and being so clear in themselves, and having so present and immediate a Force to justify the Reasonableness of this Practice, I need not indeed allow them any further Consideration, I therefore chuse to dismiss them, and pass on to my mean Intention; and that is,

To revive in your Memories, and propose to your Imitation the Character of that Gentleman whom we lately carried to his Burial, and whose Remains are here deposited amongst us.

Should I offer to draw out his Character at full length, and do him justice in all the Parts of it, I should be obliged to run through a long detail of Particulars. But that is what I cannot pretend to in a Discourse of this Nature; I shall only therefore touch upon some few of those many Virtues and Excellencies which shined most Remarkably in him, and gave a more than ordinary Distinction.

In order to this, I shall consider him, First, as a Christian, or Member of the Church.

Then as a Subject, or Member of the State.

And lastly, as a Gentleman in his private Capacity.

And, *First*, To consider him as a Christian, or Member of the Church. As such, the chief leading Principle that directed all his Actions and sway'd him in every Motion and Tendency of his Mind, was, *The Honour of* GOD. And indeed, to be governed by this sovereign Rule, *To do all things to and for the Divine Honour, is the Perfection of a Christian.* This was so deeply engraven upon his Heart, that it influenced his whole Conduct, and was visible in the whole Course of his Life. He did not content himself with the bare empty Name of a Christian, because that was the Religion of the Country where he lived, but was One in Fact and in Deed, because he knew it to be the only Method which GOD had provided for the Pardon of Sin and the Salvation of Mankind; and that the Way to make it

available

available to every Man's particular Salvation, was to live in Obedience to the Precepts it contained and gave us for Duty.

For this Reason he had a ſtrong Averſion to all Separations in Matters of Religion, and laid down this for a ſteady and immutable Principle, and was abſolutely guided by it. That there never was but One Religion, becauſe there was but One GOD, and that to divide the Church was to make more Religions than One. This is certain, Chriſtianity is a Religion of Peace and Unity, and the diſtinguiſhing Precept which CHRIST left with his Diſciples was *to love one another. By this ſhall all Men know that you are my Diſciples, if you love one another.* And happy were it for us that we had a juſt ſenſe of this One Article; what a world of Miſchief would it prevent, what abundance of Quiet would it promote! How like Heaven would this Earth be! Were we all of Sir *John Rawdon*'s Mind, Strife and Enmity, Contention and Animoſities, Bitterneſs and Revilings would fly before us; Peace and Truth would again come down from Heaven and dwell amongſt us, and we ſhould enjoy a Felicity now unknown to the World, a State of Love and Friendſhip; and GOD himſelf, as once he did, would viſit our Abodes, and delight himſelf in the Company and Converſation of Men.

Again, as a Chriſtian, he made no ſpecious ſhew of Religion. He was none of thoſe formal Profeſſors, who are always crying out, *The Temple of the Lord! The Temple of the Lord!* But as Religion was of a piece with himſelf, and not put on to ſerve a Turn, ſo it made no noiſe in the World; it was not buſy and troubleſome, loud and impertinent; it was not raiſed upon Temporal Intereſts, the Quick-Sands of worldly Policy, upon the windy Applauſes of Men, and the other weak Foundations, upon which foolish Mortals but too commonly chuſe to erect that mighty Fabrick; but it was fix'd upon a Rock, and therefore ſtood Firm and Unſhaken againſt all the Storms and Tempeſts that beat upon him, and bravely oppoſed

fed the Temptations of the World, the Flesh and the Devil, and the powerful Assaults of an Evil Generation. This is a Work that goes on *Quietly*; the Contests of Religion are all *Within*, and the World neither knows or hears any thing of them. The Powers of Religion are strong, but withal calm and silent, like the Voice of GOD, which is not in the Thunder of a Whirlwind, but in the still Whispers of a gentle Breeze. It is the Craft of a Juggler, to make a shew, whilst he is deceiving. To prate, is to impose, but such was not that Gentleman I am now speaking of; he was really what he seem'd, and did not talk great things but lived them.

Again, as a Christian, he was a Person of true Seriousness and earnest Devotion in the Publick Worship of GOD, and went to Church for no other end but to pay him Publick Honour, and do him Homage and Fealty before Men, thereby to make his Name revered, to celebrate his Attributes, and to let his own Light shine before Men, that others seeing his good Work of Piety, may learn from his Example to glorify their Father which is in Heaven. GOD instituted a Publick Worship to keep up a Sense of Religion in the minds of Men; and whenever that fails, and Men begin to draw back from the common Service of the Church, and forsake the Assembling themselves together, they do as much as in them lies to banish Religion out of the World, and blot it out of the Hearts and Consciences of Men. For this Reason, to be an Instrument to preserve Religion, he was a constant Attender upon the Publick Worship, and was ever hearty and sincere in it.

Again, with regard to Publick Worship, he was a Person that contented himself with the known stated Forms of Worship, and thought it was much better to offer up to GOD a Service that he was well acquainted with, than that to which he was a perfect Stranger, though it should come recommended to him under the shape and colour of Inspiration. He made it his Business therefore to understand his Prayers,

and

and would not be ſo bold as to offer up to GOD any thing new or imperfect, or that was not well fitted to the purpoſe it was deſigned. The Piety and Wiſdom of any particular Church is in nothing more ſeen than in the Order and Decency of her publick Liturgies, and it is by ſlow degrees that they grow to Perfection, and every Age perhaps will find it convenient to alter ſome Things, as the Circumſtances of Time and the Exigencies of the Church may require; and this is not done in Corners by the Humour and Fancies of private Perſons, but the Governours of it are regularly called together in Synod by Authority, and theſe Amendments are ſolemnly made, and receive a Sanction from a general Approbation.

It is no reproach or diſparagement to publick Forms of Prayer, that they are ſometimes alter'd and improv'd; that which is good may be helped and made better, and I hope we every day find in our ſelves ſpiritual Improvements, that we grow in the knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and in every Chriſtian Grace. And it is no inconſiderable part of Sir *John Rawdon's* Character, that he was well ſettled in a Point of this great Moment in Religion. An unſettled Worſhip ſhews an unſettled Religion, he therefore ſhew'd a peculiar Prudence in diſcountenancing the Abetters of Enthuſiaſm and Extemporary Prayer, and a more than ordinary Wiſdom in repoſing himſelf on the Wiſdom of the Church.

Again, as a Chriſtian, he had a due regard for the Clergy, the Prieſts and Miniſters of the Goſpel: He conſidered them as the Ambaſſadors and Meſſengers of GOD unto Men, as the Guardians of his Divine Oracles, as authoriſed Teachers ſet apart by GOD's own appointment, and extraordinarily commiſſioned by him for the publication of his Goſpel, for keeping up the Truths of Religion, the Revelations of GOD, and preſerving them pure and unmix'd, from the Doctrines and Corruptions of Men, and continuing them down to ſucceeding Generations *The Same*, without addition or diminution. He conſidered them as the Diſpenſers of GOD's moſt ſacred Myſteries, to apply unto Men the

 covenanted

covenanted Rites of Religion, to administer to them the Benefits obtained by Christ, by admitting us into the Church by Baptism, and so making us *Members of Christ, Children of* GOD, *and Heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven*: And likewise by giving us the *Lord's Supper*, as a means to confirm and strengthen us in our Christian Race, to support us in our spiritual Warfare, and comfort us under all the Afflictions of Life. He considered them further, as presiding in the Publick Worship of GOD, to go before us in our Prayers to him, and to offer them at the Throne of Grace, acceptable to GOD in the Sacrifice of his Son Jesus Christ, and so to conciliate the Divine Favour, and render him gracious towards us.

I say, this excellent Person had a just Value and Esteem for these: Their sacred Office and Employment, and the high Authority by which they act, was to him their powerful Recommendation, he regarded them for their Works sake. It is true, those who were more particularly adorned with eminent Degrees of Virtue and Prudence, and were distinguished for their Parts, Wisdom, and Learning, he admitted to a more intimate Familiarity; but he contemned and look'd down upon none. To despise the Clergy, and range them with the lowest of the People, speaks great Profaneness and Impiety, and argues a Contempt of GOD and Christ; the Indignities that are done to his immediate Servants, reflect upon the supreme Governour of the World, and will one Day meet a suitable Reward. *He that heareth you heareth me, saith our Saviour, and he that despiseth you despiseth me, and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me.* This he made a right Judgment of, and remembered what our Lord saith in another place, *He that receiveth a Prophet in the name of a Prophet, shall receive a Prophet's Reward.*

I go on now to speak of him as a Subject, or Member of the Common-wealth. And as such,

He had in the first place a most true and just Notion of Government, and carried the Rise and Beginning of it up to the first Original and prime Source of all Power,

GOD

GOD *himſelf*; *For the Powers that be*, ſays the Apoſtle, *are ordained of* GOD. To ſtop ſhort of this, is to leave Government without Foundation. The different Forms of Government, and the particular Laws and Conſtitutions of Nations are Matter of Human Policy and Contrivance, and the Wiſdom and Prudence of thoſe to whom the Legiſlative Power is intruſted, is concerned in them, and they may alter and ſhape them as they think fit for the Peace and Welfare of the Publick, and every particular Perſon in it. But that which gives all Laws their Sanction, and makes them Binding upon the Hearts and Conſciences of Men, is that Power and Government primarily belongs to GOD, and is derived from him. All that Men can do, is to add Temporal Puniſhment to the Breach of their Laws, they can do no more than kill the Body, but GOD can deſtroy both Soul and Body in Hell-Fire for the Contempt of his ſupream Authority, which is immediately concerned and abuſed in the Breach of every Human Law. On this account he was ever Obedient to Law for Conſcience-ſake, and his Prince had a faſt hold of his Soul, and he gave him the utmoſt, ſtrongeſt Security that his Obedience was Real and Sincere, and he did that upon a religious account which a great many do for the fear of Men only. This is to be a good Subject, to fear the Power of GOD, and to ſee his Divine Stamp in every Human Conſtitution.

Again, as a Subject, or Member of the Commonwealth, he had a true Love for his Country, and was ever pleaſed to apply his beſt Endeavours to the Intereſt and Welfare thereof. The view he had in giving his Vote in the great Council of the Nation, was the good of the Community. He entered not into the Parties and Cabals of factious reſtleſs Spirits, who ſell their Voices at a Price, and barter their Honour for Intereſt. There was no tampering with him, he was above Reward, and feared not Cenſure. He was bold and honeſt, and went on directly with his Face erect to Heaven; and was not to be corrupted by the empty Propoſals of crafty deſigning Men, who have no other Motive in all their Actions, but what is drawn from the poor high-priced

Concernments of this lower World. In him might we see revived the true *Roman* Spirit, he would not betray his Country for private Gain, or go into any Measures but such as he was convinced, had a real Tendency to the good of the Community.

I come now in the last Place to shew him to you as a Gentleman in his own private Capacity.

As such, the first thing I take notice of in him was his love of Justice. Of this he gave ample Proof by paying many thousand Pounds which no Law of his Country did oblige him to. Nothing but his own superlative Goodness, touch'd with the Honour of his Family, the sense he had of universal Rectitude, and the inward Motions of his own upright Heart, led him to those remarkable Instances of Justice; Justice shall I call it, it was something more that wants a Name, and is only to be found in some few exalted Spirits, so few, that the Moralists have not yet dared to insert it in the Catalogue of their Virtues, and the Divines may almost venture to call it the Work of Supererrogation.

And what is more remarkable still in this Case, though he was born to a large Estate, and accordingly, when he came of Age, found himself Master of a good Inheritance, yet this very Way of paying Debts of Honour, kept him poor all his Life, streigtned him in many Particulars, and stop'd his hand from doing many good Works which his Heart was fully set upon. But notwithstanding this, still

He was a Person of exemplary Charity. His publick Charities were of the most useful kind, being generally laid out in preventing those Evils which our ordinary Alms are commonly employ'd in *Relieving*.

His founding two large Charity-Schools, consisting of Twenty-four poor Children each, at his own Expence, without the Assistance of foreign Subscriptions, or calling for Aid from other Hands, are Works of this Nature not to be forgotten. This is a Method of Charity of the most excellent Influence, in cloathing poor Children, and giving them such Education of Reading, Writing, and casting Accompts, as is proper for the common Business of Life, and afterwards putting them

out

out Apprentices to uſeful Trades and Callings, beſides the particular Service that is done to each of ſuch Children, the Nation in general reaps an univerſal Advantage, and the Whole is profitted. For want of having their Minds cultivated with the Principles of Religion betimes, for want of having their Bodies inured to Labour in their Youth, and for want of good Employment, and not being bred to ſome honeſt Calling and induſtrious way of Living in the earlier Seaſons of Life, many have but too often betaken themſelves to evil Courſes, and the Extravagancies they have been led into by Idleneſs, have forced them firſt to little Filching and Stealing, and afterwards to open Robbing and Murthering on the Highways, and ſo have become publick Enemies to their Country, and at length been brought to condign Puniſhment, to untimely and ſcandalous Deaths.

But that wiſe Charity which this Gentleman choſe in breeding up the Children of the Poor is a good Proviſion againſt ſuch growing Evils, as it puts ſuch not only in a way of ſupporting themſelves by honeſt Labour, and providing for their own Families, but alſo enables them to give to the Poor, and help the Indigent themſelves in their Turn.

Beſides this, he was a Perſon of known Compaſſion, and his hand was always open to do good, in employing the Poor in Works of Improvement, in adorning his Country, and doing ſuch things as will be of laſting Uſe and Beauty. And where he was informed of the hard Circumſtances of any Family, that had fallen into want, his Charity was generous, and I am perſuaded, exceeded the Expectation of the Receivers.

It is true, he did not care for giving Encouragement to ſtroling Beggars, who make a Trade of begging, and profeſs it, to give themſelves Opportunities of ſtealing and pilfering, theſe he look'd upon as the Plague and Peſt of the Nation, and would not hear their Cant, and but rarely attended to the lying Solicitations, their Mouths are continually filled with.

But tho' he rejected theſe, his Mind was ever ſtudious of good, and to caſt about, and find out Occaſions of making himſelf beneficial to others, was a great part of

his

his Employment: And instead of avoiding Opportunities of doing good, he industriously sought them; and at last he made such a Proficiency this way, that he grew perfectly cunning in his Charity, and acquired a kind of Craft in distributing his Alms, and hiding his Bounty, and doing it secretly, being as careful to conceal his Virtues, as many others are to proclaim and publish their Vices.

Again, he was a Person of chaste Conversation; so chaste, that nothing loose or prophane was ever heard to come out of his Mouth. And I put the Question to all that knew him, did they once hear him take the sacred Name of God in vain, swear one single Oath, or utter any thing that could offend the nicest Ear? No. Ribaldry, and those Jestings which the Scripture says are not convenient, were the Aversion of his Soul, and he could not bear to hear those idle Obscenities that defile the Lips of but too many, whose Breath is Contagion, and their Conversation something worse than Corruption.

As his Conversation was thus pure and unspotted, so was his Mind. And he was a Person of that great Innocence, that Vice was almost a Stranger to his Breast: And though he continually carried about with him the original Corruption of Human Nature, and wore the common Frailties of Flesh and Blood, which are always urging and pushing us on to Sin, yet surely as few actual Sins had stained his Life as any that these latter Ages have seen, and though he lived to be near Thirty-four Years of Age, yet he had never fallen into any notorious Sin; and even his Youth, that Time of Life in which we are most subject to Temptations, and to be led away by the Violence of Appetite and the Outrages of our corrupt Desires, I say, his Youth had conquered Vice, and foiled all the Allurements of Sense, the Solicitations of Flesh and Blood, and all the Powers and Wiles of the common Enemy of Souls; and he had given the Devil so many and such early Repulses that I would persuade my self, that Foe to Virtue had quite given him over, as a Person he could not work upon; and that at last, despairing of Success, he spared himself the trouble of tempting him, and grew ashamed to see all his Malice and Arts of se-

ducing

ducing so scandalously repulsed and set at naught by him.

For this reason he lived to be perfectly at ease from any Attempts of that crafty Deceiver, and felt very few or none of those sharp struggles which embroil the Lives of Men, and tear up our Peace within. An early acquaintance with Virtue struck off all future Difficulties, and gave a compleat Serenity and composure of mind.

For this reason too he did not stand in need of any of those bitter Repentances and severe Austerities which they, who have long gone on in a Course of Sin, are obliged to impose upon themselves to attone for their past Iniquities, and appease the Anger of GOD, being one of those Righteous, which the Scripture says, need no, that is, but very little Repentance. He had no dark hours of sower Retreat, whereby to afflict his Soul, and wipe out long deadly Scores of Impiety, which they who have contracted large Debts in this way, are forced to discharge by tedious Severities; and accordingly, when he came to die, he had nothing else to do but die.

For this reason too he was a Person easy of Access, and without any formal Reserves in his Conversation: His Time and Leisure were his own, and he was always in a Posture, either to receive his Friends, or do the common business of Life: He knew nothing of the Stiff or Morose, and though, where Virtue and Wisdom called, he held a firm and bold Resolution, yet in all indifferent Cases, he could yield and bend; and like St. *Paul*, become all Things to all Men; by which means he gained upon every one he conversed with, and none scarce ever left him but with Regret, and still threw their good Wishes and Praises back upon him. And indeed, Innocence and good Nature are always near allied, and sweetness of Humour and Disposition are the genuine Product of true Virtue; Religion where-ever it is, renders a Man pleasant, and gives him an Appearance that makes him acceptable in all Companies.

Insolence and Peevishness, Pride and Affectation, Talkativeness and Self-conceit, were an Abhorrence unto him, and in the place of them we meet in him Humility and Meekness, Modesty and Silence, and an easy Chearfulness tempered with Wisdom. He was serious, without being

being ſullen, chearful without being noiſy. He had Virture without Affectation, Love for the Church without a fiery conſuming Zeal, and he was devout without being a Bigot.

In a word, and to ſay no more of him, the Character which St. *Paul* gives to true Chriſtian Charity was his; *He ſuffered long and was kind, he envied not, he vaunted not himſelf, was not puffed up, did not behave himſelf unſeemly, ſought not* [rigorouſly] *his own, was not eaſily provoked, thought no evil, rejoiced not in iniquity, but rejoiced in the truth, he bore all things, endured all things,* and like the Wiſdom which is from Above, he was firſt pure, then peaceable, gentle and eaſy to be entreated, full of Mercy and good Fruits, without Partiality and without Hypocriſy.

But he is gone, and when ſuch rare Examples are taken away from Men, they have more than ordinary reaſon to mourn and be ſad. When ſuch are removed and taken away from the midſt of us, Virtue muſt languiſh, Vice muſt triumph. It is by Example we live, and when we loſe ſuch rare Originals, what have we left to copy after.

But however Almighty God may in his Wrath, for our Puniſhment, have robbed us of ſuch an excellent Pattern of Virtue, it may at the ſame time be out of mere Goodneſs and Mercy towards him. Has the ſupream Governour of the World ſent his Meſſenger for him in the Strength and Vigour of Life? It is that he might not languiſh under the Infirmities of Years, nor ſuffer his Virtues to grow feeble (as it were) with his Body, and contract a Weakneſs with old Age; It is that he might not ſee the Evils that are coming upon a wicked Generation; It is that he might relieve him from the Pains he ſuffered in this World, from the Diſorders of an infirm Conſtitution; It is that he might reward him before his Time, and finiſh him an Angel, and in haſte give him that Crown which he had contended for here on Earth, and ſet him down at his own right hand full of Happineſs and Glory for Ever.

4 AP 54

FINIS.

In page 7. line 15. for *Preſcriptions*, read *Inſcriptions.*